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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/628,079	07/24/2003	Neville Alleyne	NAS.002A	3511
20995	7590	03/17/2006	EXAMINER	
KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP			PHILOGENE, PEDRO	
2040 MAIN STREET			ART UNIT	
FOURTEENTH FLOOR			PAPER NUMBER	
IRVINE, CA 92614			3733	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-7,9-12,14-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Luhr et al. (5,129,903).

Luhr et al disclose an apparatus comprising at least a superior and an inferior end piece (11,12), a compressible portion, as best seen in FIG.1, located between the superior and the inferior end piece. The compressible mechanism comprises a sliding mechanism (30), the sliding mechanism further comprises a parallel set of mating arms (20,21,22,23), wherein each mate within each set slides relative to the other mate. The sliding mechanism further comprises a first slider and a second slider having a U-shaped geometry ; as best seen in FIG.1; each slider further comprises a first arm, a second arm (20,21,22,23) a back (24,25) the first arm and the second arm are parallel, wherein the first arm of the first slider mates with the second arm of the second slider, and the second arm of the first slider mates with the first arm of the second slider, such that the backs of the sliders are positioned parallel to each other, wherein each back of each slider is joined to an end piece; a plurality of teeth (26,27) located on at least one of the first arms, wherein the teeth face towards the second arm of the same slider piece, a gear (30) engaged with the plurality of teeth, wherein rotating the gear moves the arms within each set of mating arms relative to each other, positioning the

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apparatus into a compressed arrangement. A housing or fixing plate (10) accommodating the sliders and the gear; a lock, as set forth in column 4, lines 13-17, the back of each slider is integral to an end piece.

With regard to the recitation that an element is "adapted to" or "adapted for", it is noted that it has been held the recitation that an element is "adapted to" or "adapted for" perform a function is not a positive limitation but requires the ability to so perform. It does not constitute a limitation in any patentable sense. In addition, the manner in which a device is intended to be employed, does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from the prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. Ex parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1887).

The method, steps, as set forth, would have been inherently carried out in the operation of the device; as set forth above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Luhr et al. (5,129,903).

With respect to claim 13, it is noted that Luhr et al did not teach of an intermediate end piece located between the superior and the inferior end pieces; as claimed by applicant. However, It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill

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in the art to duplicate the working parts of the invention, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essentially working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

5,672,177	9-1997	Seldin
6,402,756	6-2002	Ralph et al.
2,333,033	10-1943	Mraz
6,306,136	10-2001	Baccelli

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (571) 272-4716. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

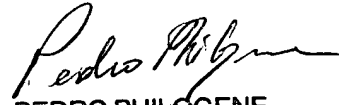
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272 - 4719. The fax phone

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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Pedro Philogene
March 13, 2006



PEDRO PHILOGENE
PRIMARY EXAMINER